

Media Release Fire Department

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

In recognition of the summer outdoor cooking season, Fire Chief Stefano Napolitano would like to remind residents of several outdoor cooking and open burning fire safety tips.

Now that warmer weather is upon us, Chief Stefano Napolitano of the City of Batavia Fire Department would like to remind residents about the dangers associated with outdoor cooking and recreational fire requirements within the City of Batavia.

According to National Statistics:

- Grill fires cause an estimated \$37 million dollars in property loss each year.
- Almost half of home grill fires occur between the hours of 5 and 8 pm.
- 57% of home grill fires occur during the months of May, June, July and August.
- Patios, terraces, porches and courtyards are the leading home locations for grill fires.
- 79% of all home grill fires involve gas grills.
- Mechanical failure/malfunctions is the leading cause of gas grill fires while grease buildup is the second leading cause.

Additionally, Napolitano recommends these additional charcoal and liquid propane (LP) safety tips:

Grills must be used outdoors. The location of a grill should be at the ground level on a smooth and level surface and not be operated on balconies, decks or porches. The use of grills indoors or in any enclosed spaces such as tents, garages, etc. pose both a fire hazard and risk of exposure to toxic gases and potential asphyxiation.

Also, position the grill 15 feet away from siding, deck railing, other combustibles, and out from eaves or overhanging vegetation. The grill should be located a safe distance from lawn games, play areas and foot traffic. Keep children and pets away from the grill area - declare a 3-foot "safe zone" around the grill. Periodically remove grease or fat buildup in trays below the grill so it cannot be ignited by heat and never leave the grill unattended.

Charcoal Grills

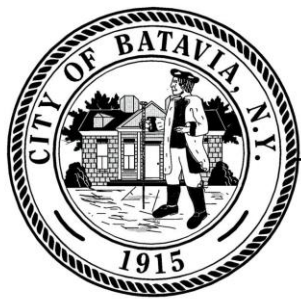
- Only use approved charcoal lighter fluid for starting the grill.
- Never use gasoline or flammable liquids to light charcoal.
- Do not add lighter fluid to coals that have already been ignited.
- Keep unused charcoal dry. Wet charcoal becomes a fire hazard as it dries out through the process of spontaneous combustion.

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- Before disposing of charcoal ashes, allow them to cool thoroughly. Keep them either in the grill or in a metal container until cool, then stir the ashes before disposal to make sure they are completely out.

Liquid Propane (LP) Gas Grills

- Inspect the gas cylinder hose and connections for leaks before using the grill for the first time each year.
- Apply a light soap and water solution to the hose and all connections; any leaks will be quickly revealed in the form of bubbles.
- If you discover a leak either by smell or by the soap test and there is no flame, turn off the gas tank valve and the grill. If the leak stops, have the grill serviced by a professional before using it again. If the leak does not stop, call the fire department.
- Be sure to open the lid of your gas grill before lighting.
- If you smell gas while cooking or see any fire outside the grill box, immediately get away from the grill and call the fire department. DO NOT attempt to move the grill.

Furthermore, the Batavia Municipal Code allows for recreational fires within the City. The requirements for a recreational fire are as follows:

- A recreational fire shall not be conducted within 25 feet of any building, structure or combustible material unless the fire is contained in a barbecue pit or outdoor fireplace. Furthermore, only “clean” wood may be used for fuel in a recreational fire.

Exceptions:

A cooking fire shall be contained in a cooking device designed for cooking and fueled by natural gas, liquefied petroleum gas or commercial charcoal briquettes.

A recreational fire contained in a container, designed for burning combustibles, positioned on a combustible surface and that is not less than 15 feet from a building or structure.

A cooking fire in a container, designed as a barbecue pit, positioned on a noncombustible surface and that is not less than 15 feet from a building or structure.

- A recreational fire that is hazardous, offensive, objectionable, or unreasonably interferes with the comfort and enjoyment of life or property due to smoke or odor emission shall be prohibited
- The Fire Chief or Chief of Police or his or her designee is authorized to order the extinguishment of a recreational fire which creates or adds to a hazardous, offensive or objectionable condition.





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Lastly, as we enjoy the warmer weather, it is recommended to practice social distancing whenever possible and the use of a face covering for any situations that requires one to be closer than six feet apart.

As always, if a resident has any questions or concerns regarding any of this information, they can contact the City of Batavia Fire Department Headquarters at 585-345-6375.

